

DVARAVATI, SI THEP, AND WENDAN

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to better define the historical position of Wendan (Land Zhenla), an 8th-century kingdom known from Chinese sources, which had a capital in northeastern Thailand. The material evidence from Thailand, primarily in the form of Buddhist boundary stones, will not yield a coherent story until it is studied more deeply, with careful attention to issues of chronology. Architectural ruins in the Angkor region show that temple building (in contrast to what some have previously thought) fell off dramatically in about the second quarter of the 8th century, consistent with the hypothesis that the area fell under the domination of Wendan. For evidence that Angkor-region craftsmen were taken north by Wendan, it is necessary to look at sculpture and monumental remains taken from or remaining in Si Thep, a city likely to have stood west of Wendan's political center. Evidence from the Delta region ("Water Zhenla"), finally, dating from the second half of the 8th century, reveals contact with Si Thep in this period and also indicates that at least some of the craftsmen who worked on Mt. Kulen (probably beginning prior to Jayavarman II's coronation in 802) were likely to have been brought from this region.

INTRODUCTION

In the early 8th century, according to Chinese records, Zhenla (Cambodia) broke into two, and both parts, "Land" and "Water," sent tribute in 717. By the middle decades of the 8th century, Wendan, as Land Zhenla was also known, had become quite powerful. In 753, a Wendan prince and twenty-six accompanying officers were received by the emperor of China. A Wendan embassy that included eleven trained elephants arrived in China in 771. Wendan's last embassy took place in 798. French translations of passages from pertinent Chinese texts were published in 1904 (Pelliot 1904: 211-15), and Briggs (1951: 58-60) offers a survey of decades of dispute over the location of Wendan. Reflecting on the late 8th-century Chinese land itinerary, Smith (1979: 448) wrote,

"This leads one to suppose that the center of Wen-tan lay well to the north of present-day Cambodia, either in southern Laos or in north-east Thailand." An expanded analysis was carried out by Tatsuo Hoshino (2002). The tendentious aspects of Hoshino's article—that the people of Wendan spoke a Tai language, for instance—should not be used to invalidate his conclusion: that Wendan's outer capital stood at the site of Fa Daet, its inner capital at Kantharawichai in northeastern Thailand (2002:46). This line of thinking was not, in fact, absent in the older scholarship: George Cœdès (1936: 2), making use of Karlgren's reconstruction of Chinese phonology, proposed that *Wendan* stood for *Mūladeśa*, a name that would survive in the *Mun* River. Still, it needs to be asked whether art history and historical archaeology are up to the task of either confirming or refuting Hoshino's identifications. Wendan is a historical reality and cannot be dismissed as a myth. If indeed it stood in northeastern Thailand, then it needs to figure in discussions of Dvaravati history and art, and the implications of its placement for the understanding of 8th-century Cambodia need to be better understood.

The year 2009 was a landmark year for Dvaravati studies, marked by two monumental publications, one the catalogue for an exhibition at the Musée Guimet in Paris (Baptiste and Zéphir 2009), the other a book covering the art of Thailand prior to around 1300 (Krairiksh 2010 [launched in November, 2009]). Neither of these books addresses Hoshino's proposals, and neither puts forward evidence that allows for a firm thumbs up or down to his theories. Nevertheless, each contains valuable evidence and considered opinions that move the discussion forward. Both books, furthermore, provide a springboard for a consideration of the state of Dvaravati studies.

I cannot write about these matters from a perspective other than that of my own study (Woodward 2003). There I took into account the views of Smith (1979) but not Hoshino. I proposed that for much of the 8th century, up until the time of the accession of Jayavarman II in 802, Wendan controlled the Angkor region (Woodward 2003: 104-05). Two sets of

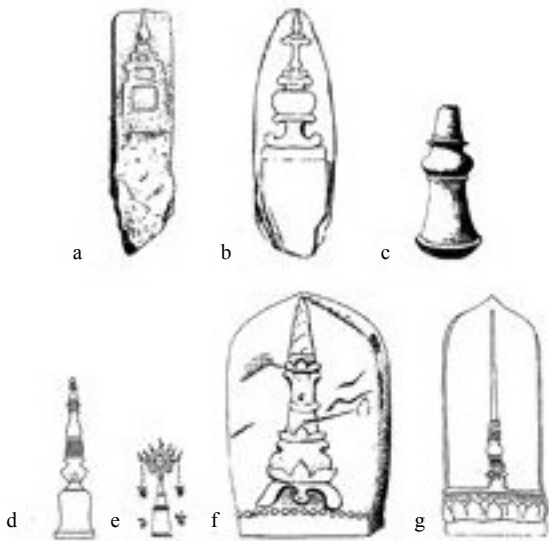


Figure 1. Sketches of kumbha stupas. (After Woodward 2003:102, Figure 17.) (a) Boundary stone at Hin Khon, Pak Thong Chai district, Nakhon Ratchasima. (b) Boundary stone from near Muang Bon, Nakhon Sawan. (c) Terra cotta kumbha from Thap Chumphon, Nakhon Sawan, with inscription in characters of the ninth-tenth centuries. In Mon, “This kyāk puṇa [meritorious offering] was made by the ancestors near the vihāra.” In Pali: *ye dhammā. . .* (d) Bronze reliquary from Na Dun district, Maha Sarakham. (e) Silver sheet with repoussé design, from Kantharawichai district, Maha Sarakham. (f) Boundary stone, Phnom Kulen. (g) Boundary stone, from Ban Tat Thong, Yasothon.

Buddhist boundary stones (*sema*) found on Mt. Kulen (first published in Boulbet and Dagens 1973), I suggested, were Wendan foundations. The form of a “kumbha stupa” found on one of these boundary stones could be seen to suggest a date in the 8th century, rather than later (presuming that the development took the form of a progressive slenderization) (Figure 1).

This was an incautious proposal because the conclusion to be drawn about the political setting would be substantially different if the date were five years (say) after 802 rather than five years before, and no such precise dating is remotely conceivable. The question of the story behind the boundary stones on Phnom Kulen is, however, only one aspect of the Wendan problem. Wendan may or may not have been a Buddhist boundary-stone culture. Locating its political center may involve estimating the age of an entirely different set of artifacts.

Rungrot Phiromanukun, author of the chapter “Les bornes rituelles du nord-est de la Thaïlande” in the Guimet catalogue, provides a meticulous survey of boundary stones and of the inscriptions upon them (Phiromanukun 2009). (Another thorough study is Lorrillard 2008: 116-28.) The first sets of ritual boundary stones, Rungrot writes, were made sometime in the ca. 600-750 period. In regard to the date of the numerous boundary stones at the site of Fa Daet, he mentions the opinion of Jean Boisselier, which is that they were made around the ninth century. He does not undertake analyses of such matters as details of costume and coiffure (among the stones with narrative scenes), which might be used to establish a firmer chronology.

This observation leads to a consideration of why the Guimet catalogue, while making solid contributions (it has beautiful and copious illustrations, short essays on a variety of topics by Thai scholars, and an awesome bibliography) adds little new understanding when it comes to issues of dating. The methodological procedure I just mentioned—making precise, careful comparisons—appears only in the handful of catalogue entries credited to Valérie Zaleski. The essays tend to shy away from chronological issues. Of course, Dvaravati chronology is inherently difficult: there are no dated objects, and establishing links among bronze, stucco, terra cotta, and stone sculptures that must date from a single time span is not an easy matter, not to mention connecting sculpture with architecture and architectural decoration. Furthermore, there is no authority. Boisselier’s views are sometimes cited in the catalogue, but as a kind of crutch, hardly ever in the spirit “I will disprove. . .” Besides, Boisselier’s opinions are spread among many different publications, and one major schematization—which involves a middle period that was a kind of Renaissance, brought about by influences from Śrīvijaya—was never fleshed out, so that it has remained more a puzzle than a thesis that can be either agreed with or refuted (Boisselier 1970). Some contributors to the Guimet catalogue refer to the views of Piriya Krairiksh (as found, in general, in his earlier publications), pretty much in the same spirit. My own writings play no role at all. A favorite instance of this absence can be found in the essay by Pierre Baptiste (2009: 222), when he characterizes as his own seductive hypothesis (“hypothèse séduisante”) an identification of secondary figures in the Nakhon Pathom First Sermon socle that appears in Woodward (2003: 71). Other contributors to the volume doubtless hold still other views: that since none of the extant scholarship is truly scientific, it should be ignored; that more data needs to be assembled before speculation about dates is allowed; that dates are not really important anyway. Needless to say, my own opinion is quite different: Dvaravati will not matter intellectually until it has a history, and it will not have a history without the frequent juggling of hypotheses, by numerous scholars.

Inscription	Location	Reference
K. 3	Phnom Ba The	Coedes 1936
K. 103	Preah Theat Preah Srei	Coedes 1938-66(5): 33
K. 121	Preah Theat Kvan Pir	Finot 1904
K. 134	Lobok Srot	Coedes 1938-66(2): 92-95.
K. 145	Prasat Phum Prasat	Coedes 1938-66(6): 72
K. 235	Sdok Kam Thom	Chakravarti 1978
K. 259	Vat Khnat	Coedes 1938-66(7): 50-57
K. 688	Prasat Prei Prasat	Coedes 1938-66(4): 36
K. 749	Ak Yom	Coedes 1938-66(5): 57-58. Redated to 674 in Jacques 1986: 88n. See also Vickery 1998: 128 number 50.
K. 753	Ak Yom	Coedes 1938-66(5): 58-59
K. 807	Prasat Olok	Coedes 1938-66(4): 37-38; Coedes 1938-66(6): 37-38
K. 808	Prasat Olok	Coedes 1938-66(4): 37-38; Coedes 1938-66(6): 37-38
K. 904	West Baray	Coedes 1938-66(4): 54-63
K. 956	Srok Ba Phnom	Coedes 1938-66(7): 128-135
K. 1158	Sab Bak	Prapandvidya 1990

Table 1. References to Cambodian inscriptions

The book by Piriya Krairiksh (2010), which covers Khmer art in Thailand as well as Dvaravati, is another matter altogether. It has no less than 538 illustrations, making it an invaluable pictorial reference, and most objects or structures are dated to a fifty-year period. Furthermore, when the dates appear in the CE, they appear as Arabic numerals, so that anyone who can recognize the Thai words for “end,” “beginning,” “first half,” and “second half” will be able to consult the book. In another fifty years, many of the dates will be considered correct, many wrong, but we won’t have agreed-upon dates in fifty years unless provisional dates are proposed today. Someone who compares this book with Woodward (2003) will find that as far as the relative chronology is concerned—the sequence of objects—there are more agreements than disagreements. This does not mean that the shared opinions are correct, or that they are entirely independent. But they form a starting point. (Though there are certain classes of object about which we altogether disagree.)

Dr. Piriya ascribes various Fa Daet figural boundary stones to the tenth century (2010: 345-48). It can be presumed that from his point of view, therefore, they ought not to be used as evidence for the location of Wendan (and he would probably not date the Phnom Kulen stones as early as

the 8th century). There are two other sites, however, which must be taken into consideration. One is Kantharawichai district (not far west of Fa Daet, but in Maha Sarakham province, not Kalasin), where a cache of small silver repoussé sheets was discovered, many of them with designs of stupas or “kumbha stupas” (Diskul 1979). Sketches of some of them appear on p. 135 of the Guimet catalogue, where they are dated by Santi Leksukhum (2009) to the 8th-9th century (in accordance with my own views). The other is in Na Dun district (Maha Sarakham), about 50 km south of Kantharawichai, and in the Mun watershed rather than the Chi. About 1,000 tablets were excavated at the ruins of a stupa in 1979 (for a description of the find, Woodward 2010a: 156), and among the benefits provided by the two publications is the appearance of a number of these tablets in excellent photographs (Baptiste and Zéphir 2009: 114-15; Krairiksh 2010: 340-44). In both cases the suggested dates (9th-10th century) seem too late; ca. 8th is preferable. Therefore, although the *sema* at Fa Daet cannot be used to demonstrate that there was an urban center in this region in the 8th century—as Hoshino’s hypothesis necessitates—other artifacts leave the matter open. Ultimately, archaeology should yield answers to the question. The recent research by Stephen Murphy, when fully

published, will bear on this matter. He has recorded boundary stones in both Kantharawichai and Na Dun districts (Murphy, in press).

THE ANGKOR REGION IN THE EARLY 8TH CENTURY

There is an entirely different way to look at the Wendan problem, however. This is from a Cambodian point of view. Wendan must have encompassed parts of what would have been considered “Zhenla” prior to the division of the kingdom. What is striking is that in about the 720s, a long period—which covered almost all of Cambodia—began with a paucity of inscriptions and an apparent absence of monumental structures. This is consistent with the presence of warfare and resultant depleted resources—though also with a changed ideological outlook.

The style of “Kompong Preah,” most easily identified by the presence of vegetal lintels, was defined by Gilberte de Coral-Rémusat and other scholars before the publication of two crucial inscriptions demonstrating that the style was fully formed at a date earlier than once thought (Phum Prasat, Kompong Thom province, K. 145, 706 CE; Preah Theat Kvan Pir, Kratie province, K. 121, 716 CE). (Table 1.)

There are two temple sites at Roluos (southeast of the future city of Angkor) where lintels of classic Kompong Preah type were recovered—Trapeang Phong S4 (Stern 1938b: Plate 54C; Boisselier 1968: Figure 17), Prasat Olok A (Stern 1938b: Plate 57A; Boisselier 1968: Figure 12), and Prasat Olok C (Stern 1938b: Plate 57B; Boisselier 1968: Figure 11). In addition, at Prasat Prei Prasat N., an inscription (K. 688) bearing a date equivalent to 719 is part of the fabric of the structure, which includes an octagonal colonnette (Stern 1938: Figure 55b; Coral-Rémusat 1951: Figure 38, wrongly identified). Two inscriptions were also found at Prasat Olok; one (K. 808) dates from the 7th or 8th century, the other (K. 807) from the reign of Indravarman (877-889 CE), who re-constructed the older temples. The foundational study of these temples was that of Philippe Stern (1938b). Stern wrote before the Prei Prasat N. inscription (719 CE) was published, as well as those providing the true dates for Phum Prasat and Kvan Pir. Furthermore, he accepted without question the belief that monuments on Mt. Kulen did not predate 802, in accordance with the statements about the career of Jayavarman II to be found in the Sdok Kak Thom inscription (1052 CE, K. 235). As a result, he placed the Trapeang Phong S4 lintel at the end of the 8th century, suggesting that it dated from the period Jayavarman was said to have resided at Hariharalaya, or Roluos (1938b: 182-183). When Boisselier reviewed the evidence concerning 8th-century lintels, he noted the connections between the Kvan Pir lintel of 716 and the Trapeang Phong lintel but went on to concur with Stern's view about the date of the latter (1968: 116). Stern (1938b:183) had also put the octagonal colonnette at Prasat Prei Prasat N. at the end of the 8th century, since in his view

octagonal colonnettes were a distinguishing feature of the Mt. Kulen monuments, earlier colonnettes having been round. Mireille Bénisti, on the other hand, was of the opinion that octagonal colonnettes first appeared at a much earlier date, and the Prasat Prei Prasat N. colonnette she regarded as dating from 719, the time of the inscription (2003: 203 n. 7; 2003:223 n. 2, 225 n. 2).

Archaeological excavations at Trapeang Phong in 2004 and 2005 revealed four phases of occupation, the first proto-historic, the second yielding two samples dated to within the 548-644 CE period, and the third datable to the late 8th and ninth century (Pottier & Bolle 2009: 80-84). The second and third phases correspond roughly to the separate periods of temple construction—S2, S3, and S4 (with “Kompong Preah” characteristics), followed by the later S1. Perhaps the human habitation in the second phase preceded the time of temple construction (although the fact that the tests of samples from the temple site of Ak Yom came up with exactly corresponding dates raises the possibility that they should be adjusted downward).

The impression the archaeological and inscriptional evidence gives is that activities in Roluos continued for no more than a decade or so after 719, followed by a gap in inscriptions and in the construction of temples. The few recovered and published sculptures support this impression. Among them are three sculptures from Prasat Trapeang Phong—a Harihara, a female figure, and a Shiva—that fit comfortably in the first or second quarter of the 8th century. (*Harihara*: Chronique 1936: Plate 103C; Stern 1938b: Plate 59A; Dupont 1955: Plate 35A. *Female, now Brussels*: Stern 1938b: Plate 59B; Dupont 1955: Plate 43B. *Shiva*: Dupont 1955: Plate 42A). Nevertheless, it is sometimes held, in accordance with the older views of Stern and Boisselier, that these works belong to the end of the 8th century (Dalsheimer 2001: 97). When they are published and studied, two additional stone sculptures from Trapeang Phong, on view in the Angkor National Museum (especially Vishnu, Accession Number Ka 439), will surely enrich the debate, as well as clarify the position of a later work, a Harihara, also found at the site (Dupont 1955: Plate 42B; Dalsheimer 2001: 97-98; Jessup 2004: 68, Figure 62). Precisely the same kinds of dating issues arise in the case of Prasat Ak Yom, which stands not in Roluos but at the edge of the Western Baray and may be considered the most important monument in the Angkor region with Kompong Preah characteristics. The earliest known Khmer temple pyramid, it consists of three terraces with a central sanctuary at the topmost level and corner sanctuaries on the middle terrace (Chronique 1933: 1129-1133; Bruguier 1994). Two inscriptions are both described as being on stone slabs re-used as door jambs for the southern and eastern entrances of the central sanctuary. One contains a date equivalent to 704 CE (K. 753). The other (K. 749) was formerly thought to date from 617 but the digits were re-read by

Claude Jacques as equivalent to 674 (Vickery 1998: 128 n. 150). A re-used lintel might date from 674 (Stern 1938b: 182 and Plate 54b). Colonnade fragments were considered by Bénisti to date from 704 (Bénisti 2003: 202 and figs. 325, 328). According to another inscription from the region, in 713 the West Baray area was under the control of Queen Jayadevi, daughter of King Jayavarman I (K. 904; K. 259 sections 3 and 4). It is probable that King Jayavarman himself situated his capital in the Angkor area at the end of his life, which seems to have occurred shortly after 681 (Vickery 1998: 360 n. 120, 365).

Among the older beliefs was that Prasat Ak Yom, like some of the Roluos finds already discussed, should be placed at the end of the 8th century and considered a Jayavarman II foundation prior to the 802 consecration on Mt. Kulen. Since the Ak Yom lintels are so unlike those on Mt. Kulen, however, it is hard to see how the monument could have been constructed by Jayavarman II. The beginning of the 8th century holds the temptation to connect Prasat Ak Yom with Queen Jayadevi (Jessup 2004: 60, 64). In fact, this possibility cannot be altogether dismissed. Still, there are reasons to think it more probable that the monument dates from the years following her reign. Since the jamb with the inscription dating from 704 was re-used, perhaps a certain interval of time fell before the new construction.

Some of the lintels at the site are unique in their composition. Boisselier described them as a misunderstanding of the Kompong Preah spirit ("une méconnaissance certaine de l'esprit et de la signification première du thème de Kompong Preah") (1968: 115). On one (Stern 1938b: Plate 56 D; Boisselier Figure 20), the central stalk evokes the corresponding element upon a lintel at Prasat Olok A, cited above (Stern 1938b: Plate 57A; Boisselier 1968: Figure 12), and it possible to imagine craftsmen from the same workshop executing both, despite the differences in overall composition. Another lintel (Stern 1938b: Plate LVIB; Boisselier 1968: Figure 19) has as its focal point a square gem with foliate elements above and below, the same element seen on a brick pilaster at the temple of Kompong Preah itself (Bénisti 2003: Figure 368.) On this lintel there are flanking inward-facing *makara*, clearly inspired by a Chinese model in which paired dragons chase a central pearl (Woodward 2010b: 44, 145 n. 20). (Mireille Bénisti also observed connections between these Ak Yom lintels and the Kompong Preah style, but she believed they dated from the third quarter of the 7th century [1974/2003: 297, 299, 301, 302]).

Queen Jayadevi was capable of innovation, for she was the first monarch to preface her titles with *dhūli jen*, "dust of the feet" (Vickery 1998: 366, K. 904). Still, given the revolutionary pyramidal plan and the lintels with unique design, Ak Yom, it is here suggested, was the responsibility of a patron active a little later, one aware of and stimulated by currents stemming from outside the local scene, at the

time of an altered political environment—in the years, say, following Wendan's 717 tribute mission. Perhaps Prasat Ak Yom was a Wendan foundation. I have elsewhere gone so far as to suggest that the pyramidal form of the monument was the result of knowledge of an earth altar built for an imperial ceremony in Shandong province of China in 725, in the presence of foreign ambassadors (Woodward 2010b: 44).

CAMBODIA AND SI THEP

Let us suppose then that sometime in the first half of the 8th century, with Wendan's territorial expansion, craftsmen were taken from the Angkor region to some other place. Where? Quite possibly to a site with older links to Cambodia, one that was only peripherally a part of the Buddhist boundary stone culture: namely, Si Thep. (For an introduction to the site, Skilling 2009a.)

Among the evidence for such a move is one great building. In 2008, the Fine Arts Department excavated the giant mound at the site of Khao Khlang Nok, uncovering a laterite terraced stupa. Measuring 64 meters on each face, it has a stair at the center of each of the four axes, and a brick stupa dome at the summit (Skilling 2009a: 119-20; Leksukhum 2009: 130-31). Around the base are projecting false niches, flying palaces, or, as they have been called in French scholarship, *réductions d'édifices* (edifice representations) (Figure 2). Santi Leksukhum (2009: 130) observed that they may be compared with similar features around the base of Trapeang Phong S2, at Roluos (Figure 3). The design and proportions resemble the *réductions d'édifices* ornamenting the main body of the temple at Preah Theat Kvan Pir, dated by inscription to 716 CE (Figure 4). Since edifice representations are not a feature of Dvaravati architecture, and because earlier, 7th-century Cambodian examples are broader in proportion, the evidence supports contact in the first quarter of the 8th century.

There are also indications of contact at this same time from the realm of sculpture. Adorning the octagonal miter of a hard-to-identify Hindu sculpture from Si Thep (in the Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena) is a floriated gem quite unlike the medallions with affixed curled elements characteristic of Si Thep design of the 7th century (Pal 2004:112-13). It is, on the other hand, similar in character to the gem seen on the center of a lintel from Prasat Ak Yom and on a pilaster at Prasat Kompong Preah, both of which have been cited above. Fully understanding the implications of the relationship, however, means constructing a better chronology for Si Thep sculpture and determining how much contact took place in the decades immediately prior to the Norton Simon sculpture, which is beyond the scope of this paper.

Another body of material also supports the case for a connection between Si Thep and Wendan. Evidence for ties to China can be seen in the plan of the 8th-century Buddhist



Figure 2. Khao Khlang Nok, Si Thep. (Photograph: Nicolas Revire.)



Figure 3. Trapeang Phong S2, detail of base. (Photograph: author.)

relief carvings in Thamorat Cave, fifteen kilometers west of Si Thep. The presence of a central pillar, not a feature of other Buddhist cave sites in Thailand, indicates some knowledge of the plans of Chinese Buddhist cave sanctuaries (Brown 1996:87). More specific evidence is provided by a votive plaque fragment with the name of a Chinese monk inscribed on the back, which was discovered at Si Thep. A better preserved example is held by the Harvard University Museums (Brown 1996: Figure 52ab; Skilling 2009a: 121; Woodward 2010a: 156-57). These tablets are likely to be somewhat later in date than the stupa or the sculpture at the Norton Simon Museum, and therefore indicative of the presence of a Chinese visitor around the time of Wendan's major tribute missions to China, in 753 and 771.

Hoshino has identified place names other than Wendan with Si Thep (2002: 34, 41). Historical geographers who know the Chinese texts will have to review the evidence. It is not maintained here that the geographical information permits an identification of Si Thep as the capital of Wendan, only that Si Thep must have been a significant city in the polity.



Figure 4. Preah Theat Kvan Pir, edifice representation. Line drawing. (After Parmentier 1927: Figure 64.)

THE END OF WENDAN

Wendan sent its last embassy to China in 798. King Jayavarman II came to the throne in 802 CE—a date that must be accepted, though it appears only in later inscriptions (Majumdar 1943). The monuments on Phnom Kulen, on art historical grounds, date from his reign, although there are no associated inscriptions. The absence of vestiges clearly datable to the ninth century at Si Thep suggests that Jayavarman II indeed defeated Wendan. The dates just mentioned—798 and 802—plus this negative archaeological evidence support such a conclusion, which holds, regardless of the “Javā” problem. Later Cambodian inscriptions refer to a state called “Javā,” either as an enemy or as a place of origin for Jayavarman II (K. 956, K. 235, K. 1158). Perhaps this historical information is all mythical (Vickery 2001 and 2006). It is not known to what state *Javā* refers: if it’s a matter of a late tenth- or eleventh-century myth, it could be the island of Java. If it is not a myth, then other interpretations may make more sense. Possibilities include the northern part of the Malay peninsula (Jacques 2005:24), Champa (Vickery 1998: 387, a view he subsequently rejected), a principality far up the Mekong (Hoshino 2002: 62), or Wendan itself (Woodward 2003: 99). Claude Jacques reviewed the older instances of related names—the Sanskrit *Yavadvīpa* (the island of Java), *Java* in a Cham inscription of 799—but it is not at all clear what the different spellings connote, if anything (Jacques 2005: 21-24).

Although, with no firm dates, there is no easy way to establish which, if any, of the Hindu sanctuaries on Mt. Kulen predate 802, the fact that these monuments are not paralleled elsewhere supports the probability that they ought to be associated with Jayavarman II, either before or after 802, and are not Wendan foundations (cf. Dumarçay and Royère 2001: 45). There is much to be said for bringing art history into conformity with the historical reconstruction of Michael Vickery. Consistent with the hypothesis of a rupture in construction following the building of Prasat Ak Yom in the first half of the 8th century would be the view that most of the Phnom Kulen workmen came from outside the Angkor region. Vickery wrote that later inscriptions preserved a genuine genealogical memory, of families that had accompanied Jayavarman II from southeastern Cambodia to the Angkor area (1998: 396). If that is the case, sculptors could certainly have been among the migrants. A Jayavarman who is likely to be the Angkorian “Jayavarman” of later tradition is attested in two contemporary inscriptions, K. 103 of 770 and K. 134 of 781, from Sambor on the Mekong (Kratie) (Vickery 1998: 395-96). The 770 inscription was found near an ancient walled city, Banteay Prei Nokor (Kompong Cham), where there is a pre-Angkorian temple with octagonal colonnettes—but not one that can be firmly dated (Bénisti placed it closer to 700 than to 800, 2003: 232 and Figure 378).

FILLING IN THE 8TH CENTURY

There are two good reasons for paying especial attention to southeastern Cambodia, particularly the Delta region. One is that some of the artistic practices seen on Mt. Kulen can perhaps be traced back to this area, and associated with the progression of Jayavarman north- and westward. The other is that Water Zhenla, no less than Wendan, needs to be considered a historical reality, and therefore there should be traces of its existence in the Delta.

First, however, several incidental issues relating to Wendan should be addressed. One is its relationship to Dvaravati. If Si Thep was so powerful in the 8th century, it is possible that it exercised some control, not just over Lopburi, say, but sites further west, Nakhon Pathom, U Thong, and even Khu Bua. This, in turn, raises questions about the history of central Dvaravati: did it have pre- and post-Wendan phases? Certain Dvaravati features at Si Thep might have been the result of interaction following conquest. (On the other hand, they may have come about from the peaceful movement of a certain number of monks, perhaps preceding Wendan’s rise.) The two giant rectangular platforms—Wat Khlong at Khu Bua and Chedi Khao Khlang Nai at Si Thep, which are similar in character—beg for explanation. Santi Leksukhum has suggested that both were originally *chedi-wihan*, with stupas at the western end and halls for worship at the eastern (2009: 131). One intriguing stone sculpture, the Buddha image in the Cleveland Museum of Art (Brown 1996:35, Figure 50), can be understood as the product of an 8th-century Si Thep workshop, the Buddha’s facial modeling indebted to stuccos at Nakhon Pathom or U Thong (e. g., Baptiste and Zéphir 2009: 168, 183).

Another matter is that of the extent of Wendan presence on Mt. Kulen. If the hypothesis concerning the inspiration for Prasat Ak Yom is correct, maybe the great pyramid on Mt. Kulen, Prasat Rong Chen, was also a Wendan foundation. The possibility that two sets of boundary stones were constructed prior to the Jayavarman II period was raised at the beginning of the article, and to these Smitthi Siribhadra proposed an intriguing addition, namely the giant image of the reclining Buddha (2009: 25 n. 3). If these works post-date 802, on the other hand, an alternative historical scenario is still conceivable: perhaps the presumed dominance of Si Thep was resented by the communities of the Mun and Chi watersheds, and Jayavarman II found allies among the Khmer and Mon of these regions in a war against Si Thep. It would have been these amicable relations, in turn, that led to the foundations on Mt. Kulen.

One way to address the issue of Khmer art in the 8th century is through a consideration of extant scholarship. Two extremely sophisticated studies of lintels appeared decades ago (Boisselier 1968; Bénisti 2003). Their conclusions were quite different, and the issues raised have never been resolved. Bénisti argued that the Kompong Preah-style

lintels were the product of an evolution, culminating in the purely vegetative designs of 706 and 716. According to Boisselier, on the other hand, the Kompong Preah-type lintel was a new paradigmatic type ("un changement total qui interdit toute véritable évolution" [1968: 104]). The two studies are not entirely parallel because Bénisti, having placed nearly all the lintels Boisselier considered as 8th-century back into the second half of the 7th century, never went on to write about the 8th century or about what she considered to be the sources for the Mt. Kulen lintels. Groping one's way through the opposing arguments, it is by no means easy to produce a new synthesis—a synthesis that, at any rate, would have to take the form of an extended study. Nevertheless, perhaps it will eventually be agreed that Sambor C1 dates from the second half of the 7th century (Bénisti's view), while—in accordance with Boisselier—Prasat Andet, together with its celebrated image of Harihara, belongs to the first half of the 8th century (because of the morphology of the foliage), and the two lintels from Tuol Kuhea (Mekong Delta, Ta Keo province, Boisselier 1968: figs. 31, 33; Bénisti 2003: 266-69; Porte 2008: 155) are also 8th century (because of the incorporation of spirals). Another Delta lintel that appears to incorporate spirals, was found at Ba The (An Giang province, Viet Nam) and is known from a line drawing (Parmentier 1927(1): 38 Figure 24, 93-94; see also Dalet 1944: 73).

Another approach would be to build new clusters of objects. One starting point might be the large stone image of Avalokiteshvara now in the Philadelphia Museum of Art, despite the fact that its find spot—most probably one of the Thai provinces bordering Cambodia—is unknown (Jessup & Zéphir 1997: 154-155). It may be considered a "Wendan" work of the first half of the 8th century, around the time, thought Jean Boisselier (1981), as the Harihara of Prasat Andet. The garment is short, articulated by incised lines, and has a straight lower edge; it much resembles the garment on a bronze lotus-bearing Avalokitesvara found at Ak Yom (Dalsheimer 2001:234). Garments worn and depicted in exactly this way do not generally characterize the later sculptures from the cache of bronzes discovered at a temple site on Plai Bat Hill, straddling Prakhon Chai and Lahan Sai districts in Buriram province (Bunker 2002). These images were formerly known as the Prakhon Chai bronzes and are plausibly "Wendan" in their origins. Traces of this sort of garment can be seen, however, on a presumably early bronze of Plai Bat Hill type, a small bodhisattva in the Norton Simon Museum (Bunker 2002: 119; Pal 2004: 132-133). A strong argument can be made, therefore, that this bronze tradition can be traced back, at least in part, to the Ak Yom sculptors, and that therefore craftsmen moved north following Wendan expansion, just as demonstrated by the Si Thep evidence.

A stone sculpture displaying a related garment is the Surya from Ba The, Viet Nam (Dupont 1955: Plate 12A;

Tingley 2009: 172-173). On the basis of this work, it is possible to think of Si Thep and the Mekong Delta region—or, to put it differently, Wendan and Water Zhenla—as being in contact with each other. Images of Surya are found in both places (Skilling 2009b). The octagonal miter is a common feature on Si Thep sculpture, and it is found on the Ba The Surya as well as on an 8th-century Harihara from Ta Keo province (Dalsheimer 2001: 96-97, National Museum Accession Number Ga 1616). Surely the worship of Surya is to be connected with monarchs whose titles ended in *-āditya* (sun). K. 259, an inscription of Queen Jayadevi mentioned above, refers to the *guru* of Nrpāditya, and K. 3, from Ba The (the source of the Surya image and of a lintel mentioned above), speaks of Nrpādityadeva (Vickery 1998: 183, 381-82). "Sun" images and "sun" monarchs are an 8th-century phenomenon.

Presuming that the Jayavarman of the 770 and 781 inscriptions subsequently became established on Mt. Kulen, the question of whether his origins lay in the Water Chenla of the Delta is a matter of uncertainty (cf. Vickery 1998: 383-404). At any rate, the 781 inscription (K. 134, st. 3) suggests that Jayavarman was an heir to the Surya cult, for it provides a unique mention of an image, a *Tigmāṅśu* ("hot-rayed sun"), accompanying a Śrī Siddheśvara, presumably a Shivalinga (Malleret 1966: 116). As for the craftsmen who might have accompanied Jayavarman, there may be an evidentiary trace in the motif of monster masks with arms, at the far ends of a lintel, as seen at Tuol Kuhea (Boisselier 1968: Figure 31) and, on Mt. Kulen, on a lintel at Prasat Kraham (Stern 1938a: Plate 36A). Additional speculation might focus on the Panduranga kingdom of Champa, given the new dating of the temple of Hoa Lai to 778 CE and the Cham features of Prasat Damrei Krap on Mt. Kulen (Griffiths and Southworth, in press).

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

After this article went to press, Michel Ferlus, "Localisation, identité et origine du Javā de Jayavarman II," *Aséanie* 26 (December 2010):65-81 came to the author's attention. It is the view of Ferlus that the Javā of the Cambodian inscriptions was Land Zhenla (Wendan).

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